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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 /071 W
----------290614Z 032563 /20
R 281725Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2232
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PLAB, FR
SUBJECT: CGT-CFDT PUBLIC SECTOR STRIKES

1. THE CGT-CFDT SPONSORED PRE-MAY DAY DEMONSTRATIONS OF WORKER DISCONTENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES CULMINATED ON APRIL 28 WITH PUBLIC AND NATIONALIZED SECTOR STRIKES, AND A PARADE IN PARIS. DUE TO THE UNIONS' STRENGTH IN CERTAIN KEY AREAS (ELECTRICITY, GAS, POSTAL, RAILWAYS) PUBLIC SERVICES ACROSS THE COUNTRY WERE DISRUPTED, IN SOME CASES SEVERELY. BUT THE STRIKE WAS NOT UNIVERSALLY OBSERVED, AND THE OTHER MAJOR UNIONS WERE ABLE, WITH MINOR EXCEPTIONS, TO KEEP THEIR PEOPLE IN LINE AND OUT OF THE STRIKES.

2. THE PARIS PARADE PROVIDED AN INTERESTING GLIMPSE INTO THE APPARENT NATURE, STRENGTH, AND ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY OF THE CGT AND CFDT ON THEIR JOINT BIG DAY. A WELL-BEHAVED COLUMN OF MARCHERS, WHICH WE ESTIMATE AT 15 - 20,000 (PRESS ESTIMATES RUN HIGHER), FOLLOWED CGT GENERAL SECRETARY SEGUY AND HIS CFDT COUNTERPART MAIRE, UNDER SUNNY SKIES, FROM THE GARE ST. LAZARE
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TO THE PALAIS ROYAL. THE MARCHERS WERE OVERWHELMINGLY CGT (NOT LESS THAN 80 PERCENT) AND YOUNG, INCLUDING A VERY HIGH PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN. MANUAL WORKERS WERE RELATIVELY SCARCE.

3. THESE APRIL 28 STRIKES HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTIVE. TO THE EXTENT THAT IT WAS NEEDED, WE HAVE BEEN

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REMINDED THAT THE CGT IS, ORGANIZATIONALLY, THE
DOMINANT PARTNER IN THE ALLIANCE WITH THE CFDT. WE
HAVE ALSO BEEN REMINDED THAT IT IS THE STRATEGIC
POSITION WHICH THE CGT OCCUPIES AMONGST THE RELATIVELY
WELL-PAID AND SECURE WORKERS IN THE NATIONALIZED
INDUSTRIES, PARTICULARLY ELECTRICITY, WHICH GIVE
THESE KINDS OF STRIKES THEIR STING. WHAT WE HAVE
SEEN, THEN, WAS NOT AN EXPRESSION OF WORKER DISCONTENT,
BUT A SHOW OF CGT STRENGTH IN CERTAIN KEY SECTORS OF
THE ECONOMY.

4. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT BUT FOR THE CGT AND THE
CFDT ALL WOULD BE SERENE IN THE LABOR FIELD. WORKER
DISCONTENT WITH THE WAGE CONTROLS IS REAL AND THERE
IS NO RELIEF IN SIGHT. MOREOVER, THE GOVERNMENT'S
PROGRAM TO COMBAT UNEMPLOYMENT BY LABOR MARKET MEASURES
(SEE PARIS 12322) ARE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE UNIONS.
THIS OPPOSITION IS NOT COMPLETELY POLITICALLY MOTIVATED.
THE MODEST MEASURES DESIGNED TO REDUCE INSTITUTIONAL
BOTTLENECKS AND PLACE THE NEW LABOR MARKET ENTRANTS
FALL FAR SHORT OF THE KIND OF BROAD GAUGE REFORMS
THAT HAD BEEN HINTED WERE IN THE WORKS. SOME OF THE
MEASURES PROPOSED MAY EVEN PROVE POLITICALLY COUNTER-
PRODUCTIVE (E.G., THE TRAINING PROGRAMS; THE EXISTING
FACILITIES ARE ALREADY OVERCROWDED AND HAVE BACKLOGS).
IN ALL, THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAMS SUGGEST THAT IT HAS
BUT LITTLE APPRECIATION
FOR EITHER THE ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL VALUE OF
DEVELOPING COMPREHENSIVE MANPOWER PROGRAMS TO
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SUPPLEMENT ITS FINANCIAL MEASURES.
GAMMON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Format: TEL
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977049/aaaaahhe.tel
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Review Date: 02-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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SAS ID: 2903422
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TAGS: ELAB, FR, CGT-CFDT
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